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The Philosophy of Loyalty. By JOSIAH ROYCE. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1908. — pp. xiii, 409.

This new book of Professor Royce's is, as he tells us, not a text-book, and does not mean to be an elaborately technical research. Nor is the author writing merely and mainly for philosophers, but for all those who love ideals, for all those who love their country, — "a country so ripe at present for idealism, and so confused, nevertheless, by the vastness and the complication of its social and political problems. To simplify men's moral issues, to clear their vision for the sight of the eternal, to win hearts for loyalty, — this would be, in this land, a peculiarly precious mission, if indeed, I could hope that this book, could aid, however little, towards such an end" (Preface). The goal at which Professor Royce is aiming is the old one of finding the fundamental principle of morality; it is a *Grundlegung der Sitten*, with the accent, however, placed upon the practical application. Like Kant, he seeks to establish a supreme standard which shall serve as a guide even to the commonest reason and in all the relations of life, a criterion that will put an end to our moral doubts and give meaning and stability to human conduct, a concept from which all the other duties may be rationally deduced. This basal virtue is loyalty, "the heart of all the virtues, the central duty amongst all the duties" (p. viii). About a rational conception of loyalty, he thinks, you can truthfully centre your entire moral world. Justice, charity, industry, wisdom, spirituality, are all definable in terms of enlightened loyalty (p. 15).

What is this loyalty? Professor Royce devotes the largest part of his book to defining the term and showing all that it implies. Loyalty is the willing and practical and thoroughgoing devotion of a person to a cause. Your cause is something objective, it is not your private self. Moreover, it is wholly impersonal, it concerns other men; loyalty is social. Again, a cause is general and so tends to unite the many fellow-servants in one service. Whoever is loyal, whatever be his cause, is devoted, is active, surrenders his private self-will, controls himself, is in love with his cause, and believes in it. Loyalty tends to unify life, to give it centre, fixity, stability. Since no man can find a plan of life by merely looking within his own chaotic nature, he has to look without, to the world of social conventions, deeds, and causes. Now, a loyal man is one who has found, and who sees, neither mere individual fellow-men to be loved or hated, nor mere conventions, nor customs, nor laws to be obeyed, but some social cause, or some system of causes, so rich, so well knit, and, to him, so fascinating, and

withal so kindly in its appeal to his natural self-will, that he says to his cause: 'Thy will is mine and mine is thine. In thee I do not lose but find myself, living intensely in proportion as I live for thee' (Lecture I). Loyalty is for the loyal man chief amongst all the moral goods of his life, because it furnishes to him a personal solution of the hardest of human practical problems, the problem: 'For what do I live? Why am I here? For what am I good? Why am I needed?' (p. 57).

But some causes are good, while some are evil. We therefore need a test of good and evil. A cause is good, not only for me, but for mankind, in so far as it is essentially a loyalty to loyalty, that is, an aid and a furtherance of loyalty in my fellows. Hence so choose your cause and so serve it, that, by reason of your choice and of your service, there shall be more loyalty in the world rather than less. All the common-place virtues, in so far as they are indeed definable and effective, are special forms of loyalty to loyalty, and are to be justified, centralized, inspired, by the one supreme effort to do good, namely, the effort to make loyalty triumphant in the lives of all men. I shall serve causes such as my natural temperament and my social opportunities suggest to me. Nevertheless, whatever my cause, it ought to be such as to further, so far as in me lies, the cause of universal loyalty. My causes must form a system, they must constitute a single cause, a life of loyalty. Have I then duties to myself? Yes, my duty to myself is the duty to provide my cause with one who is strong enough and skilful enough to be effective according to his own natural powers. Have I private and personal rights, which I ought to assert? Yes, precisely in so far as my private powers and possessions are held in trust for the cause, and are, upon occasion, to be defended for the sake of the cause. And my duties to my neighbors, too, justice and benevolence, are mere aspects of our one principle. Justice means, in general, fidelity to human ties in so far as they are ties. If you are just, you are decisive in your choice of your personal cause, you are faithful to the loyal decision once made, you keep your promise, you speak the truth, you respect the loyal ties of other men, and you contend with other men only in so far as the defense of your own cause, in the interest of loyalty to the universal cause of loyalty, makes such contest against aggression unavoidable. Benevolence is that aspect of loyalty which directly concerns itself with your influence upon the inner life of human beings who enjoy, who suffer, and whose private good is to be effected by your deeds. Since no personal good that your fellow can possess is superior to his own loyalty, your own

loyalty to loyalty is itself a supremely benevolent type of activity. And since your fellow-man is an instrument for the furtherance of the cause of universal loyalty, his welfare also concerns you, in so far as, if you help him to a more efficient life, you make him better able to be loyal (Lecture III).

But is the principle of loyalty to loyalty an actually general, safe, and sufficient test of what is right and wrong in the doubtful moral situations which may arise in daily life? Does our principle tell us what to do when loyalties seem to be in conflict with one another? It tells us: Decide, knowingly if you can, ignorantly if you must, but in any case decide, and have no fear. "As a fact, the conscience is the ideal of the self, coming to consciousness as a present command. It says, *Be loyal*. If one asks, *Loyal to what?* the conscience, awakened by our whole personal response to the need of mankind replies, *Be loyal to loyalty*. If, hereupon, various loyalties seem to conflict, the conscience says: *Decide*. If one asks, *How decide?* conscience further urges, *Decide as I, your conscience, the ideal expression of your whole personal nature, conscious and unconscious, find best*. If one persists, *But you and I may be wrong*, the last word of conscience is, *we are fallible, but we can be decisive and faithful; and this is loyalty*" (Lecture IV). That is, the way in which to show loyalty to loyalty varies endlessly with the individual and can never be precisely defined except by and through his personal consent. Provided the cause to which I am loyal involves the union of personal interests, provided I do not enter into any unnecessary destruction of the loyalty of others, provided I seek to further loyalty as a common good of all mankind, I must leave to the individual the choice of the cause or causes (pp. 200-3).

Now, what must be true about the universe if even loyalty itself is a genuine good, and not a merely human illusion? If loyalty has any truth, human lives can be linked in some genuine spiritual unity. Such a unity is a fact. Loyalty, therefore, has its metaphysical aspect. It is an effort to conceive human life in an essentially superhuman way, to view our social organizations as actual personal unities of consciousness, unities wherein there exists an actual experience of the good which, in our loyalty, we only partially apprehend. Whoever talks of any sort of truth whatsoever, be that truth moral or scientific, the truth of common-sense or the truth of a philosophy, inevitably implies that the world of truth of which he speaks is a world possessing a rational and spiritual unity, is a conscious world of experience, whose type of consciousness is higher in its level than is the type of

our human minds, but whose life is such that our life belongs as part to this living whole. Against pragmatism Professor Royce declares that the loyal are not seeking *only* a mere collection of their private experiences of their personal thrills of fascination. You cannot express the value of your loyalty by pointing at the mere heap of the joyous thrills of the various loyal individuals. We need unity of life ; in recognizing that need Professor Royce's own pragmatism consists. We never find unity present to our human experience in more than a fragmentary shape. We get hints of a higher unity. But only the fragmentary unity is won at any moment of our lives. We therefore form ideas,—very fallible ideas,—of some unity of experience, a unity such as our idea of any science or any art or any united people or of any community or of any other cause, any other union of many human experiences in one, defines. Now, if our ideas are in any case indeed true, then such unity is a fact successfully experienced upon some higher level than ours, and is experienced in some conspectus of life which wins what we need, which approves our loyalty, which fulfils our rational will, and which has in its wholeness what we seek. How do I know all this? I know simply that to try to deny the reality of this whole of truth is simply to reaffirm it. To deny that there is truth, or that there is a real world, is simply to say that the whole truth is that there is no whole truth, and that the real fact is that there is no fact real at all. Such assertions are plain self-contradictions (Lecture VII). “The thesis that the world is one whole and a significant whole of conscious life is, for these reasons, a thesis which can only be viewed as an error, by reinstating this very assertion under a new form. For any error of mine concerning the world is possible only in so far as I really mean to assert the truth about the world ; and this real meaning of mine can exist only as a fact within the conspectus of consciousness for which the real whole world exists, and within which I myself live” (p. 372).

Our ethical theory has transformed itself into a general philosophical doctrine ; and loyalty now appears to us not only as a guide of life, but as a revelation of our relation to a realm which we have been obliged to define as one of an eternal and all-embracing unity of spiritual life. This realm of reality is conscious, is united, is self-possessed, and is perfected through the very wealth of the ideal sacrifices and of the loyal devotion which are united so as to constitute its fulness of being. So we may now define loyalty as the will to manifest, so far as possible, the Eternal, that is, the conscious and super-human unity of life, in the form of the acts of an individual self.

Although one can be loyal without being consciously and explicitly religious, loyalty, if sincere, involves at least a latent belief in the superhuman reality of the cause, and means at least an unconscious devotion to the one and eternal cause. But such a belief is also a latent union of morality and religion, and such a service is an unconscious piety. However, whoever serves the universal cause inevitably loses his cause in our poor world of sense-experience, because his cause is too good for this present temporal world to express it. A lost cause, however, has two companions, grief and imagination, and these two are the parents of all the higher forms of genuinely ethical religion. Such religion interprets the superhuman in forms that our longing, our grief, and our imagination invent, but also in terms that are intended to meet the demands of our highest loyalty. For we are loyal to that unity of life which, as our truer moral consciousness learns to believe, owns the whole real world, and constitutes the cause of causes. In being loyal to universal loyalty, we are serving the unity of life.

We can know *that* we are linked to the eternal ; *how* we are linked, our sciences do not make manifest to us. The symbolic portrayal of religion attempts to characterize, in its general outline, an absolute truth ; this may be called the creed of the Absolute Religion, and consists in the following facts : First, the rational unity and goodness of the world-life ; next, its true but invisible nearness to us, despite our ignorance ; further, its fulness of meaning despite our barrenness of present experience ; and yet more, its interest in our personal destiny as moral beings ; and finally, the certainty that, through our actual human loyalty, we come, like Moses, face to face with the true will of the world, as a man speaks to his friend. All this seems to Professor Royce to be an inevitable corollary of his theory of truth (Lecture VIII).

It would be impossible, within the short compass of a review, to give an adequate criticism of this little volume, which evolves a complete philosophy of the universe and of life out of a single ethical principle. We might call this system a system of rationalistic and idealistic ethics. In method it resembles the system of Kant, for Kant, too, derives a whole host of truths from his supreme moral principle ; in its results or content it betrays kinship with the school of thought which has been variously described as energism, perfectionism, ethical idealism, and which counts among its followers nearly all the great thinkers from Socrates and Plato down to Lotze, Green, Wundt, and Paulsen. It is not a new doctrine, — only the terms

employed are new ; its fundamental teachings are as old as the history of ethics. Whatever criticism may be passed upon it by us will touch its form rather than its content, will bear on the rationalistic rather than on the idealistic side of it. As we said before, the author's aim is to find a basal principle of ethics, a standard which shall serve as a practical guide of life. This is a legitimate undertaking ; human beings will never give up the search for principles that will bring meaning into their lives and conduct. Professor Royce finds such a principle in loyalty : " Be loyal to loyalty, do what you can to produce a maximum of the devoted service of causes, a maximum of fidelity, and of selves that serve and choose fitting objects of loyalty." This is a noble virtue, but unless we read into it all our virtues and our entire traditional morality, it cannot serve us as the basal principle of ethics ; it will, like Kant's famous criterion, remain too general and empty to be of any great theoretical or practical value. ' Be loyal to loyalty,' — this is like commanding : Be just to justice ; be good to goodness, be true to truth, or to thine own self be true ; honor honor, etc. Professor Royce admits the impossibility of defining precisely how the individual shall show his loyalty to loyalty, and falls back upon the conscience, for better or for worse. But any one of the fundamental virtues would, if supported by a developed twentieth-century conscience, prove just as satisfactory as the loyalty principle as a general guide. In a certain sense it is true, as the old Stoics said, that he who has one virtue has them all, but in that sense loyalty has no advantage over the others. The fact is the different virtues describe different forms of moral behavior for us, and only by defining them to suit our purposes can we make any one of them stand for all. It may be wise in moral preaching, in order to reach practical ends, to emphasize a particular rule of conduct and group around it all the rest. But though this is part of Professor Royce's aim, his purpose goes deeper after all. " Our philosophy of loyalty," as he tells us, " must try to delve down to the roots of human conduct, the grounds of our moral standards." " And the lesson will be this : In loyalty, when loyalty is properly defined, is the fulfilment of the whole moral law " (p. 15, compare pp. 7-8).

The reason why Professor Royce is able to deduce from the concept of loyalty all the fundamental virtues and duties is that he reads them into it : he simply succeeds in getting out of his notion exactly what he has put in. He cannot therefore be said to have reached " the roots " of human conduct. He does not justify the virtues by a principle ; he does not explain the moral laws ; he simply defines his criterion

in such a way as to embrace them all. Loyalty is not a principle ; it is a general label for all the virtues. Under it he embraces the forms of conduct which will, in his opinion, tend to realize the highest good ; Have a cause or ideal ; it will give plan and unity to your life, and make it worth living ; let it be a social ideal, an ideal which will make it possible for your fellows to strive after the good. In order to realize the ideal, you must be loyal, devoted, truthful, trustworthy, faithful, etc. ; you must care for yourself and others ; you must be just and benevolent ; you must follow the recognized rules of morality. All this appeals to us, and there is no particular harm in bringing all these excellent precepts under the term 'loyalty,' — other terms would do equally well, — but that does not make loyalty the ground of our moral standards.

The real criterion which seems to me to lie in the background of Professor Royce's thought and by which he justifies all the loyalties, all the virtues and duties, is the social criterion, social unity, a kingdom of ends, a union of selves inspired by social ideals. This is the standard with which we are everywhere confronted in the book : Your cause is objective, not your private self, it is wholly impersonal, concerns other men, tends to unite many fellow-servants in one service, is an aid and a furtherance of loyalty in your fellows, that is, of universal loyalty. Thoroughgoing devotion to a social cause is the demand. Private rights and duties, the rights of neighbors and the duties to neighbors, all are to be justified by the effort to make loyalty triumphant in the lives of all men. Expressed in the language of the schools this would mean : The welfare or perfection of individuals in society, or social welfare, is the criterion of morality ; such acts are good as tend to realize social welfare, the welfare of individuals in society.

But, as we have seen, Professor Royce deduces from the concept of loyalty not only the rules of conduct, but a system of metaphysics. It is a faith, a beautiful idealistic faith, a faith that has worked wonders in this world and will never cease to work wonders. We can even say that it is not an unreasonable faith, indeed, that it is a reasonable faith. Those who accept it have a basis for their ethics that will satisfy them. But it is not a logical deduction, an absolute truth, or even an inevitable corollary of Professor Royce's theory of truth. We wish it were. It is based on the longing for the eternal ; it is the wish of the heart that the good may endure beyond the present, that there may be a spiritual kingdom in which all that is of highest value to us human beings may be preserved for evermore. Our moral life, however,

would not be an illusion if we could not prove these things. Humanity could not exist and live the kind of life which the men we most revere have praised as the life of real worth, without obeying the rules which are the result of a long and hard-won experience. So long as we are what we are, we must value the higher life ; and so long as we do that, we must value the means leading to it. So long as life exists on earth, it shall be a worthy life : that is our will ; and it cannot be such a life unless it be a moral life, hence, that is our will too. We believe that men will hold it worthy as men have held it worthy, and we hope there is an Eternal Consciousness in which all that is true and beautiful and good may endure. But Critiques of Practical Reason, Prolegomena to Ethics, and Philosophies of Loyalty have not supplied the logical proofs.

These criticisms, however, do not affect the great practical value of the book ; it gives beautiful and forceful expression to ethical idealism, and grandly fulfils its purpose "to simplify men's moral issues, to clear their vision for the sight of the eternal, to win hearts for loyalty." There is moral enthusiasm in it, there is patriotism in it, there is love of humanity in it. It comes from the heart of a man, from the big heart of a big man, from a fine loyal soul. Fichte never spoke with greater fervor and eloquence than does this idealist of Cambridge, and it is to be hoped that his words will sink deep into the hearts of the nation.

FRANK THILLY.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY.